

EUROVIA RESPOND TO ANDREW TURNER MP

The company behind the proposed asphalt plant in Cowes, Eurovia Roadstone, has responded to a series of questions put to them by Andrew Turner, Member of Parliament for the Isle of Wight.

Scott Wardrop, Managing Director of Eurovia Group Limited, has assured Mr Turner that the company would bring their many years of experience in operating asphalt plants of this nature to the proposed facility at Medina Wharf, particularly with a view to ensuring that any impact on the local community is mitigated and minimised.

Mr Wardrop has written: *“We are confident that the site we have selected is entirely suitable and most appropriate for this asphalt plant, as it is a brownfield site prescribed by Isle of Wight Council for future industrial use. We hope that the Planning Authority will reach the view that the concerns raised can be sufficiently addressed through a number of conditions and our commitment to adhere to the regulations which relate to the use of such facilities.”*

Eurovia has directly challenged the MP’s assertion that the position of their company and the Isle of Wight Council on the need for an asphalt plant are at odds. Writing on this point, Mr Wardrop says: *“When the Council states that there is no requirement for a new local asphalt plant to supply the PFI contract, they are correct. There is no explicit requirement within the PFI contract to provide such a plant here on the Island, as it is clearly for us to determine how best to meet our contractual obligation to provide high performance asphalt. However we have reached the view, as we did throughout the bidding stage, that it is our preferred solution to build an Island-based asphalt plant under our direct operational control.*

“What I can advise you is that the Council has been aware of our plans for a local asphalt plant, on brownfield development land prescribed for industrial use, throughout the bid process.

“Therefore I do not agree with your assertion that the positions articulated by Eurovia and the Isle of Wight Council are contradictory. Quite the contrary, our positions complement each other by setting out the respective positions of both parties and the appropriate separation of responsibilities, particularly given our interface with the Isle of Wight Council as a Planning Authority.”

Eurovia has also acknowledged that the planning process has taken longer than they originally anticipated and were advised. With the application having been submitted in April 2012, it was hoped that installation could have been in early 2013. But Mr Wardrop has stated they *“appreciate that the Planning Authority has wished to be thorough in their examination of the complexity of the issues raised. There was a hiatus when the Secretary of State ruled there was not a requirement for an Environmental Impact Assessment and the Isle of Wight Planning Authority could deal with the*

submission under their normal powers. We are now hopeful that a decision can be made in the next couple of months, thereby allowing some certainty to be brought to these matters.”

Mr Wardrop has also addressed concerns over asbestos, by highlighting *“that many former such brownfield sites which are found on examination to contain asbestos have subsequently been managed effectively and gone on to be perfectly safe for future industrial or residential use. In many respects the discovery of asbestos is helpful as it means that we can now address this concern fully, and reassure all concerned.”*

Mr Wardrop ended his letter to Mr Turner by stating Eurovia’s aspiration that the plant would *“contribute to the long-term regeneration of the Medina Valley, and Medina Wharf in particular, in line with the vision set out in the Island Plan Core Strategy. We recognise that our proposed use of Medina Wharf will help secure its future viability, which undoubtedly is to be welcomed. Furthermore, our proposed use of this brownfield site, which is in an employment regeneration area zoned for industrial use, gives this former landfill location a worthwhile future. Given your own past comments urging the use of brownfield sites, I hope you will recognise that our ambitions in this respect closely accord with your view.”* This picks up on past statements by Mr Turner in which he urges the use of brownfield sites.

A full copy of the letter from Eurovia to Mr Turner is also attached.

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